

## Coins

# Skyrocketing costs end in a burst of revisions

By Roger Boye

**THE FRENZIED** rare coin market has forced editors of the "Red Book" to make thousands of price changes in the 1981 edition of collecting's most important reference.

Almost all rare coins listed in the book — including the popular 1909-S VDB Lincoln cent, 1916-D dime, and 1932-D quarter — have gone up 10 per cent or more in price in the last year. Many other collector gems, such as certain gold coins and commemorative half-dollars, have doubled in price, according to Red Book figures.

"We've made more price changes in the 34th (1981) edition than ever before," said Kenneth Bressett, the book's editor. "The changes also represent the greatest percentage increase in prices in one edition."

The annually produced Red Book, known formally as "A Guide Book of United States Coins," by R. S. Yeoman, is one of the most successful books in American publishing. Sales figures

aren't released, but hobby experts believe nearly 20 million copies have been printed since 1946.

As in past editions, the newest Red Book includes the average "retail prices" for all U.S. coins in several condition categories. Prices are compiled from information supplied by more than 50 prestigious coin dealers.

"Choice condition pieces continue to lead the way in the U.S. coin market, and rare-date coins show strong upward movement," Bressett said. Also, many silver dollars and proof set prices have gone up dramatically.

In addition to coin prices, the Red Book includes much information on the history, weights, and compositions of all U.S. coins, and a special section on gold and silver.

Coin dealers in the Chicago area are selling the 1981 Red Book for \$4.95 — \$1 more than last year's edition, but still a bargain.

**THE NEW** edition of the most complete book ever written on world paper money is also on

sale at many coin stores for \$35.

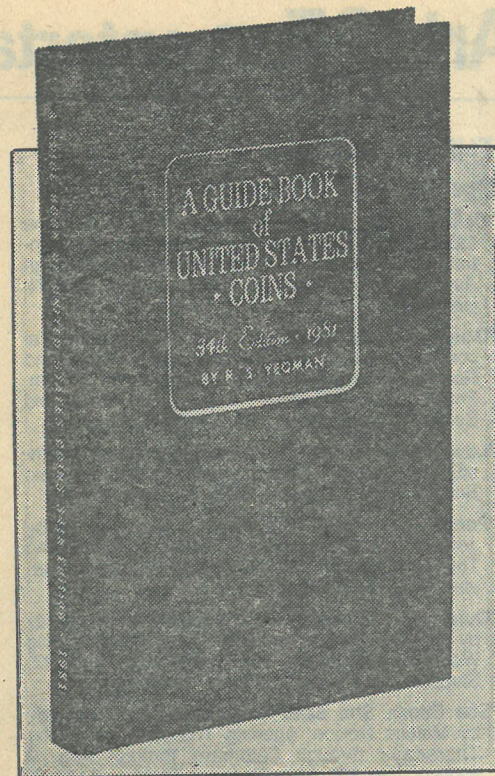
The 1,088-page catalog — which is almost as large as the Chicago phone book — lists the paper money issued by more than 300 countries, with the coverage on most nations beginning in the late 1700s. The 1980 (third) edition of "Standard Catalog of World Paper Money," by Albert Pick, is the book's first revision in three years.

**STARTING TUESDAY**, collectors can order gold medals made by the United States Mint by completing order forms available at post offices.

Government workers had planned to start the sale June 16, but they postponed the date because of delays in printing and distributing order blanks.

Prices of the one-ounce and half-ounce medals will change daily with the fluctuating price of gold. To learn the prices, collectors must call, toll-free, 800-368-5510 starting Tuesday.

Treasury officials say they will accept orders until Aug. 30, unless all the medals are sold before then.



The latest "Red Book": It contains "more price changes than ever before."